

## THINGS TO COME

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theatre of personal and private truths to a theatre of more public and communal awareness, so the theatre of purely private gain is gradually giving way to a theatre of public benefit. The transition is slow but steady. More people would go to the theatre if they were only stimulated to do so—and if they could afford to go. There are entire sections of our population who do not go because the subject matter or the process—in addition to the prices—do not suit them. But that caring minority which still depends on the theatre for at least a portion of its sensuous and emotional sustenance is gradually growing, and will continue to grow—if only the theatre does what it alone can do: make its audiences experience the essential nature of the living of life.

Along with the rest of our society, the theatre will go the way the world goes, with a bang or a whimper. Presumably, it is still the theatre which can suggest to us, a few minutes ahead of the journalist or the politician, which way that is going to be. The theatre is fundamentally poetry, not prose. And our playwrights are poets who can read

the shapes in the sands ahead of the rest of us and form the tremors we don't even know we're feeling into sentences and speeches. We can stop saying that theatre as art is dead or passé—and admit that it is only our own fault, the fault of those who are working in it, that theatre happens to be less important or effective than it used to be.

I'd like to live long enough to see the demise of words like "hit" and "flop," "revival," "show business." Do we "revive" Mozart or Modigliani? Is Isaac Stern in the "music business"? And I'd like to see the day when audiences pay more attention to their own responses than to what the critics said. And the evening when an airline pilot, while he's landing, tells me what's playing that night at the Arena Stage or the Beaumont (if anything!) as well as what the Yankees or the Redskins did that afternoon. Sometimes I agree with Brecht that if a theatre ticket cost no more than a pack of cigarettes, we'd have the greatest theatre in the world—without needing any artistic changes or *pronunciamentos*.

Someday I'd like to feel that actors—and directors, and the rest of us who labor in the theatre's chaotic landscapes—might be provided some

semblance of stability and sanity in their artistic lives instead of the hit-and-miss madness with which they daily have to cope. I'm dreaming of a day when I can actually go to a "repertory theatre" in New York City—or anywhere else in these United States—that's actually playing more than one show at a time, and changing the bill each night on purpose.

In spite of the playwrights, the critics, the unions, the system.

In the meantime, I'm keeping my eyes open for more Zelda Fichandler and more Adrian Halls and more Jon Jorys and more Lloyd Richardses.

The system, we've got to remember, is us. □

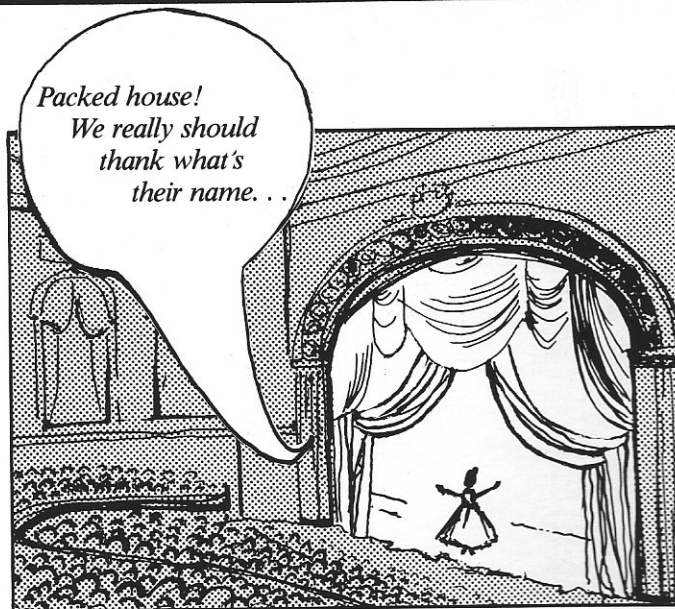
## RHYTHM & TRUTHS

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That's the only part that interests me anymore.

### Why?

Because the rest of it just seems verbose and overblown. It seems unnecessarily complicated. But that little simple scene at the beginning of that act, it's great. It's perfect. I could watch that all day. It's just got a musical thing to it, you know? That kind of thing happened.



**F**ortunately most of our clients do remember us and our work!

(Just ask New York City Ballet, Alley Theatre, and San Diego Repertory, to name a few.)

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